

Clinton did offer to return all or some of the weapons in the pipeline if Pakistan would agree to cap its nuclear program. Pakistan rejected this offer. In fact, by receiving the ring magnets from China, Pakistan was continuing to act—in defiance of the United States—to further its nuclear ambitions.

Finally, the administration came up with a compromise: While 28 F-16 fighter jets would not be delivered to Pakistan—they already have 40 F-16's—the 368 million dollars' worth of equipment would be delivered with no strings attached.

What we are doing, Mr. Speaker, is ending the ban on providing weapons to Pakistan, and receiving nothing in return.

The delivery of these weapons comes just about a month before the general elections in India, Pakistan's neighbor. Tensions between these two South Asian nations remain high. Pakistan has fought three wars with India during the past 48 years.

Clearly, India will see the delivery of these weapons as a slap in the face. The opposition BJP party in India, which has already gained in strength, is running on a platform promising a much harder line in terms of relations with Pakistan, relations with the United States, and India's own nuclear weapons development program. While this story may be buried on the back pages of American newspapers, I can guarantee you that the delivery of the United States weapons to Pakistan will be page 1 news in India—to the benefit of those forces in Indian society that oppose the recent move toward closer commercial and strategic cooperation between India and the United States. The United States has in the past few years become India's largest trading partner. Why are we jeopardizing this important new economic relationship?

Mr. Speaker, I have nothing against improved relations with Pakistan, but I believe this goal should be achieved through economic means. The Government of Pakistan devotes much too large of a share of its scarce resources to the military, to the detriment of the people. If the administration wants to engage Pakistan, let's engage them with more trade and support for democracy building institutions.

Nuclear nonproliferation is and should be a top U.S. foreign policy goal in this post-cold-war world. The Pressler amendment has been a pillar of America's nonproliferation efforts. We should not weaken this law with waivers or loopholes.

Pakistan keeps giving us every reason to keep the Pressler amendment in force.

Mr. Speaker, I will be working with some of my colleagues to enact a resolution of disapproval for this weapons transfer, and I hope we can achieve broad, bipartisan support. Providing these weapons to Pakistan would be a grave error that would threaten the stability of South Asia, international

nuclear nonproliferation and the interests and prestige of the United States.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York [Mrs. KELLY] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mrs. KELLY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

HONORING EUNICE MERRILL, WOMAN OF THE YEAR FOR THE FIFTH DISTRICT OF ALABAMA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Alabama [Mr. CRAMER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CRAMER. Madam Speaker, it is an honor to come before the House tonight to pay tribute to a very special woman from the Fifth District of Alabama. She is Mrs. Eunice Merrill from Huntsville, AL.

Many years ago, at a time when there were very few women in Alabama running their own businesses, Miss Eunice opened Eunice's Country Kitchen.

It is a place where people of all ages and all stations in life gather together. It is truly a crossroads in our community, where everyone can share breakfast and a common table.

The food and the conversation are big attractions, but one of the main reasons people come from all around is Miss Eunice herself.

She treats everyone who walks through her door like they are family, whether they are long-time friends or first-time customers. No matter how early it is or how busy it is, Eunice always has a smile and a kind word for every person.

While she is beloved for her kindness and her hospitality, Miss Eunice is revered for her extraordinary work for charity, especially on behalf of the Arthritis Foundation.

But, last November, Mr. Speaker, tragedy struck Miss Eunice. She was leaving her house for work at 4 o'clock in the morning, as she did most every morning to begin fixing breakfast for her customers.

As she walked from her house to her car, Miss Eunice was brutally attacked and robbed. She was rushed to a hospital to undergo emergency surgery.

Not only did she survive the attack, but after a week's stay in the hospital, at the age of 78, Miss Eunice was back at work.

She didn't even postpone the fundraiser she had organized for the Arthritis Foundation, which she held, just as she planned, on the very first day she returned.

Mr. Speaker, Mrs. Eunice Merrill is a glowing testament to the heart and strength of the human spirit. While her story of survival is inspiring, it is simply one chapter in a life story of faith and perseverance.

I am proud, Mr. Speaker, to stand here tonight to honor the Woman of

the Year for the Fifth District of Alabama, Mrs. Eunice Merrill.

MEDICARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. MILLER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to talk about the Medicare program, because we are about to receive the 1996 report from the board of trustees of the Medicare program. It was just a year ago that we received the 1995 report, in April 1995, stating that Medicare was going bankrupt. The report from the board of trustees stated that it was going to be running out of money this year and all the reserves of the Medicare program would be totally exhausted in 7 more years. And the trustees of the Medicare program are basically appointees of the Clinton administration, the Secretary of HHS, Donna Shalala, Secretary of Treasury, Mr. Rubin, the Secretary of Labor, Mr. Reich and others. This is a bipartisan report.

The fact is Medicare is going bankrupt. And what I want to talk about today is what has happened since the last report, as we are about to receive the 1996 report.

From my area in Florida, I have a very large number of seniors. In fact I have more seniors in my congressional district than any other congressional district in the United States. It is very important for all the seniors in my district. It is important to me personally. I have an 87-year-old mother who is on Medicare. But it is also important for all the people in my district because of the jobs and the impact on the economy.

Sarasota Memorial Hospital is the second largest employer in Sarasota County in Florida. So it is a jobs issue that is important, to take care of the seniors in my district, and it is something that we need to fight for and save. It is not a political issue. Medicare is too important an issue to be played with as politics.

Well, what did Congress do during the past year about the Medicare program? First of all, we listened. I sent letters out and asked for advice from my constituents and received over 1,000 responses. Members in Congress held over 1,000 town hall meetings all over the United States asking for input and advice, what they should do about the Medicare program. We listened, and we listened well, and got ideas. We came up with a plan.

Two things we found out: One is, Medicare is in crisis; and the other item we learned is, it is full of waste, fraud and abuse. Those are the two things that kept getting repeated time and time again. We have a major problem with the Medicare program. We understand that. We need to do something about it. And it is the waste, fraud and abuse. So what did Congress do?